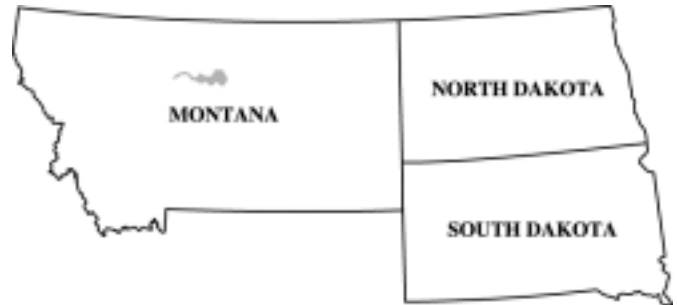




Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- On January 17, 2001, the president designated the Upper Missouri River Breaks a national monument.
- The designation does not affect grazing privileges, existing oil and gas leases, hunting or fishing.
- The designation excludes the area from mining exploration and development under the 1872 mining law, precludes future oil and gas leases, and limits OHV use to existing roads and trails.
- Tourism is increasing in the area.
- The approaching Lewis and Clark Bicentennial promises to accelerate this increase. This rate of visitor growth is creating concerns about user conflicts and resource impacts.



HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- Much of the monument was already part of the Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River, which Congress designated in 1976.
- After gathering and considering extensive public comments, the Central Montana Resource Advisory Council made recommendations to the Secretary on how to manage the area.
- This past spring, BLM developed an interim plan (called State Director Guidance) to guide decisions and activities in the monument until a comprehensive management plan can be prepared. That Guidance, which incorporates public input, protects existing uses such as grazing, hunting, etc. and protects the resources covered by the Proclamation, was finalized June 15, 2001.
- The area supports livestock grazing, wildlife and fisheries, hunting, outfitting and sightseeing.
- Within the monument, there are also several wilderness study areas; areas of critical environmental concern; cultural and paleontological sites; and the Lewis and Clark and Nez Perce national historic trails.
- The area's natural beauty, combined with books, television specials and other mass communication products related to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, have dramatically increased public awareness and visitation.
- Increased use leads to increased potential for user conflicts.



WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- The BLM has been working for several years to address the needs that increased visitation will bring. We initiated a visitor study to better predict the normal, annual increases and visitation related to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. These efforts need to continue, and we will make infrastructure improvements as limited funding allows.
- We are developing a long-term monument management plan through extensive public involvement. In developing a management plan that addresses requirements of the monument proclamation, we will strive to reflect public input, user concerns, and recommendations from the Central Montana Resource Advisory Council.

WHO ELSE IS CONCERNED?

- Public interest is high both locally and nationally.
- The conservation community and those involved in the tourism industry continue to support the monument designation.
- Those involved with agriculture along the river corridor or in the uplands fear a monument designation will impact their ability to use their private in holdings and/or their BLM grazing permits within the monument.
- In August 2001, a governor's task force recommended making some changes in the monument boundary. As these recommendations were beyond Department of Interior authority, the governor has indicated federal legislation may be pursued.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Gary Slagel, Monument Manager, (406) 538-7461; or go to our website at <http://www.mt.blm.gov/lco/um/index.html>.

